



# SPNNNEWS

STATE SOLUTIONS. NATIONAL IMPACT. OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2016

## THE NETWORK: Built for Such a Time as This

BY TRACIE SHARP In this time of uncertainty—such as we face with this year's presidential election—one truth provides me clarity of vision and hope for the future: This network was established and built for times like these.

Many of us are asking ourselves what this election means and how we got here. Every state think tank leader knows the answer, though it may hit us in the face like cold water. For many generations now, we have failed to connect the principles of liberty with the benefits of liberty. To our dismay, many have looked to the federal government for answers. The result: dysfunctional government and a fragmented citizenry.

Does this seem gloomy? Perhaps. But for many people, it portends opportunity. For such a time as this, our work at the state level has never been so important. The American Founders knew this day would come, and the states would need to band together to restore the balance of power in this country. Now more than ever our network needs to seize this opportunity.

How do we get from here to there?

We're going to need tenacious, **principled** idea entrepreneurs who can advance market-oriented policy reforms that speak to the audiences we need about the benefits they need. We must defend and protect innovators, and do a lot of innovating ourselves.

The most important solutions to pressing human challenges have come from the private sector: both white- and blue-collar entrepreneurs. Instead of protecting the individual rights of these innovators, government, its progressive allies, and crony capitalists bully these courageous individuals and bind them with red tape. Our freedom network can and should help.

Furthermore, we citizens are a mix of contradictions, so innovation is essential to meet differing needs. We consume more information than ever but have less knowledge. We have access to more information channels than ever, but we narrow those

channels with filters that suit our biases. We insist on choices and personalization with products and services we understand. But we elect politicians who peddle one-size-fits-all, big-government answers for

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Tracie Sharp, president and CEO of State Policy Network, speaking in Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the SPN 23rd Annual Meeting.

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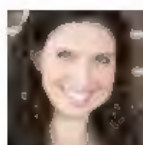
*"Keep your message  
light, tight, and bright."*

Darin Morley, Show-Me Institute

# The Best Communications Advice I Ever Received...

By Meredith Turney

Over the last 24 years, but especially in the last four years, State Policy Network think tanks have attracted outstanding communications talent to lead the network's efforts in messaging freedom. Now there are over 40 full-time network communications professionals across the country. They bring unique skill sets and perspectives to their organizations, so SPN asked them to share the best advice they have received—strategic or tactical—that has impacted the way they approach their communications work.



**Valerie Wickboldt, vice president of  
communications, James Madison Institute**

"You hear over and over again from communications professionals, 'What's the goal?' It is not just a question to annoy others, but a question that is necessary to help establish a strategic baseline purpose for every effort an organization undertakes. To align all staff around the underlying purpose for an event, a marketing material, a policy publication, a media interview—whatever the output—a discussion about the goals for that task needs to be conducted first and foremost. This results in better planning, unambiguous expectations, and a more motivated staff. Once everyone is on the same page, the goal or goals that were set at the beginning of the planning stages are much more likely to be achieved as a result of answering, 'What's the goal?'"



**Mark Cunningham, director of marketing and  
communications, Beacon Center of Tennessee**

"The media can smell BS from a mile away. It's important to be careful around them, but it's just as important to be authentic."

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SPN News gathers information from across the country and the movement so that SPN can incubate and accelerate the best ideas and the most effective strategies for achieving big wins for freedom. SPN News keeps the network connected by sharing case studies, updates, and success stories from network leaders and organizations. SPN News also advises the network of trends, threats, and opportunities to ensure they are well positioned to do their innovative work and maximize their impact.

## MISSION STATEMENT

State Policy Network's mission is to catalyze thriving, durable freedom movements in every state, anchored with high-performing, independent think tanks.

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# THE STEWARDSHIP WORKOUT

By Robert C. Osborne Jr.

For years I have tried to figure out why stewardship gets talked about so much and implemented so little. I think it's probably a little like exercising on regular basis. We know it's good for us and that we should do it, but if the choice is exercise versus work or family, exercise slides down the priority list. As human beings we are instinctively good about doing the things we need to do right at this moment, and we are bad at doing the things that are longer term and more strategic.

But just as a lack of exercise will have real costs to us down the road, a lack of stewardship has real costs as well. The more we understand the nature of those costs, the more likely we are to take them seriously. Right now, the average donor retention rate in this country is 43 percent. For every \$100 a charity gains in new donors, renewals, and upgrades, it loses \$92. These are dismal statistics, and while your own organization's retention rate may be better, few of us are hitting 80–90 percent donor retention.

If you knew that a lack of exercise would lead to you suffering a debilitating stroke in 2024, would you start an exercise regimen? I bet you would. Of course, we can't know something like this with any certainty. But in the highly quantifiable world of fundraising, we can make a reasonable

calculation about the costs of not engaging in strong stewardship. It takes anywhere from four to 14 times the resources to acquire a new donor than to retain an existing donor. So, the simplest way to think about this is abstractly: Attracting new donors means spending at least four times the money, four times the time, and four times the effort of simply remaining in place. That's time and money that could be spent growing your fundraising or improving your programs. These are real costs to you and your organization, real resources that you are missing out on, and real time and mental energy that you have to expend.

Of course you can make a more concrete calculation. If you know your retention rate and your average gift size, you can gauge the money you are losing. Let's say you have 100 donors but lose 40 every year at an average gift size of \$100: You have lost the opportunity for \$4,000 dollars. If you know your acquisition costs per donor you can see that you are losing even more money. The mathematically inclined can further refine these calculations by taking the three-year retention rate (which is almost always significantly higher) and estimating the cost of every donor who doesn't reach that three-year mark. You'll quickly see you are most likely missing out on the opportunity to make tens of thousands—perhaps hundreds of thousands—of dollars per year. Throw in the real money you are spending on acquisition to replace lost donors and you'll realize the staggering cost to you and your organization.

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# THE MACKINAC CENTER IS TRYING TO SOLVE MICHIGAN'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE

(Hint: It's Probably the Same in Your State)

By Jarrett Skorup

**Every resident of Michigan has at least \$3,800 in debt.**

It's not from credit cards or car loans but from what the state and local governments owe pensioners.

The numbers are stark. Unfunded liabilities—the difference between what has been promised and what has been set aside—total nearly \$40 billion. The school retirement system makes up the bulk of this, falling \$26.7 billion behind. The state system needs \$5.8 billion more to catch up. The 100 largest cities and 83 counties are on the hook for \$5.4 billion. And the problem continues to grow.

For decades, politicians on both sides of the aisle have made bad assumptions about the state workforce and investment returns. Often, policymakers simply didn't put aside enough money—they spent it on other priorities.

After the national recession, which hit Michigan years before the rest of

the country, things came to a head. Pension debt skyrocketed, squeezing the budgets of municipalities, school districts, and the state. In fact, more than \$1 billion extra is coming out of the state budget to pay for pensions now compared to just five years ago—and it still isn't enough, as liabilities continue to grow. Pension liabilities now make up 36 percent of total school payroll costs.

But there is a path forward. Twenty years ago, Michigan showed the way. In 1997, Michigan became the first state to shift its government employees off a defined benefit pension system and onto a defined contribution, 401(k)-type plan. The fund still has unfunded liabilities because of past pensions

offered, but the shift has saved taxpayers up to \$4 billion and made the retirements for current pensioners and workers more secure.

The problem is clear: Politicians simply cannot be trusted to fund pension systems. The incentives to spend on other concerns here and now are stronger than the motivation to save for later. In Michigan and across the nation, in cities and states governed by Republicans, Democrats, or nonpartisan officials, pensions don't get funded—they get underfunded.

The solution is clear as well: To protect current and future pensioners, new school and local public employees need to be shifted to a 401(k) plan.

This transition is a challenge, but that's where outside groups are stepping up. The Mackinac Center is teaming up with SPN as part of the Free Together marketing campaign. Free Together was launched earlier this year with the Beacon Center of Tennessee. The campaign's efforts



led to the repeal of the Hall tax, making Tennessee a truly income-tax-free state. The Mackinac Center is excited to be the second network group to participate in Free Together. Through market research conducted by Heart+Mind Strategies, Mackinac adopted the campaign slogan, "In Our Hands MI," which conveys that solving the state's current fiscal woes is in the hands (or mittens) of Michiganders, not the politicians who created the crisis. It's an inspiring message that highlights the Free Together theme of making citizens aware of freedoms lost and empowering citizens to save them.

Working with *Free Together* creative agency Emergent Order, the Mackinac Center has developed a persuasive video message that explains the pension problems and outlines solutions. The overall advertising campaign centers on two former teachers, Roger and Mary Kay Relich, who are enjoying retirement but are concerned about the status of the pension system in Michigan. They have heard politicians' promises over the years but worry about the squeeze these commitments are putting on schools. And everyone in Michigan saw what happened in Detroit, where pension costs helped cause the nation's largest municipal bankruptcy, resulting in real cuts for former workers.

Roger and Mary Kay share their story in the video, and Mackinac Center research on the issue rounds out the presentation. The advertising campaign has reached over 300,000 people to date, and the positive response rate has been high. This connection with normal citizens is concurrent with legislative and donor outreach driving legislation forward in Lansing to ultimately solve the pension problem.

The Mackinac Center is working to guarantee Michigan's government workers a secure retirement; prevent higher taxes and service cuts to citizens; and end long-term, multigenerational debt. To learn more, see [www.InOurHandsMI.com](http://www.InOurHandsMI.com). ■



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**FreeTogether.org shares the stories of individual Americans working to build and maintain a free society founded on the principles of political liberty, private property, and personal responsibility.**

If you would like to learn more about how you can participate in the *Free Together* project, please contact Carrie Conko at [conko@spn.org](mailto:conko@spn.org). To see more about the campaign, visit [FreeTogether.org](http://FreeTogether.org).

## Stewardship

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Luckily, like exercise, doing a little something (30 minutes of exercise a day) is profoundly better than doing nothing or doing something infrequently. Here are a few quick things that will make a real difference in your fundraising health:

1. Call every new donor. This has a dramatic effect on first-year retention.
2. Have a new donor welcome package. This also can have very positive results for first-year retention.
3. Send acknowledgments out within 48 hours. This simple step, again, can strongly affect retention.
4. Send an impact report out twice a year to every donor. Each donor deserves to know the impact his or her gift has made, and every donor is worth retaining because of lifetime value and potential capacity.
5. Conduct a "thank-you-a-thon." Call all your donors again to thank them and talk about impact. It's easy, cheap, and will have a real effect on retention.
6. Visit your \$1,000+ donors and talk stewardship in person. The personal touch will generate a strong return on investment and create the possibility of major gifts.
7. Conduct a donor satisfaction survey to measure how well your stewardship is working. Do your donors feel like they are well informed about the impact they are making?



Robert C. Osborne Jr. is principal at The Osborne Group, a full-service fundraising and management consultancy for nonprofits. Follow Robert at [@bobosborne17](https://twitter.com/bobosborne17) or [theosbomegroup.com](http://theosbomegroup.com).

Following this simple "workout" will strengthen your development program in a short period of time, freeing up resources to devote to your mission. ■

## The Network From Page 1

some of the most important choices in our lives, such as those affecting healthcare and education.

Much has been written about this lately from those who understand the times.

Peggy Noonan—President Reagan's former speechwriter and a columnist with *The Wall Street Journal*—has written about the growing separation between the protected and the unprotected. The protected class, in Noonan's view, are the lawmakers, the big business leaders, the party leaders, the people living in protected enclaves across America, who make rules and decisions but don't often have to live with the consequences. The unprotected class are Americans who don't pass the laws or make big decisions but must live with the day-to-day results on the ground.

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In this time of uncertainty—such as we face with this year's presidential election—one truth provides me clarity of vision and hope for the future: This network was established and built for times like these.

The result, as Noonan sees it, is the "great detachment." The unprotected feel less attached to parts of society that once commanded their allegiance: government and their political party, but also big business and the very ideas of economic liberty that many of us take for granted, such as immigration, free trade, and free speech—concepts that are under assault by people who feel they are victimized by them.

Noonan's observation coalesces around the insights from Yuval Levin of *National Journal*. Levin notes that success in life used to require navigating big institutions effectively—succeeding in college, finding a job in a big business, and knowing how to work the levers of government.

But in Levin's view, our lives increasingly are built around and thrive on smaller networks: affinity groups of friends, colleagues, and associates who have taken on more power because of the proliferation of communication channels.

Think about what the typical career looks like in the 21st century. Does anyone start at a company hoping to be there for 30 or 40

years? No one I know does. People are extremely mobile today and use jobs and companies as stepping stones. We leverage social media tools like LinkedIn to constantly make connections and loop in to new opportunities.

How about buying a car? Or picking a restaurant for dinner? Or finding a babysitter? Thanks to the internet and related innovations, we have seemingly solved the knowledge problem, lowering the barriers to accessing information. With just a click, we can seek input from our community of Facebook friends and Twitter followers. Or we can seek wider information from third-party review sites like Angie's List or Yelp.

So why, in an era of increasing mistrust in big institutions, are the three most popular political leaders (Clinton, Trump, and Sanders) promising bigger government or more powerful leadership?

What is the connection among the great detachment, increasingly customized products and services, and the electorate's 2016 selections for president? Values research and hindsight will tell us someday, but I offer some thoughts for the here and now.

People are more open to new ideas when they're fed up with old, failing ideas. As Peggy Noonan says, political actors won't change until they are "concussed into" changing. Uber wouldn't be popular today if taxicabs offered stellar service. Airbnb is a direct outgrowth of what Yuval Levin talks about: people forming smaller networks that meet their needs better than the big hotel chains.

Too often, perhaps, political leaders claim to represent hardworking Americans without really demonstrating respect. At times Americans are telling the government, "Leave me alone." Maybe more often they say, "Give me the space to get this done. I can earn my way. Let me be free to work with my neighbors, friends, and others to fix my problems."

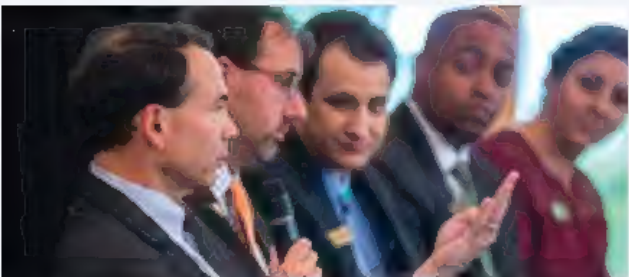
This attitude doesn't work as well when it comes to the bigger and more complex decisions in areas these hardworking people feel are outside their expertise, such as healthcare, education, and the larger economy. They are willing to trust one-size politicians more in those spaces. But it's precisely there where this network can make a big difference.

We need to ask ourselves tough questions. How will we create politically viable policies that allow idea innovation and purpose-driven communities to flourish? How will we remove barriers to freedom and offer sustainable alternatives to regulations that ultimately protect incumbent businesses and chill innovation?

How will we reach hardworking Americans—the unprotected—whose lives are littered with information but who struggle to connect that information to decisions that will most affect their well-being?



Throughout the country, SPN's focus is to accelerate and incubate the effectiveness of idea entrepreneurs and state-focused allies. Our state partners help lead the discussion about how this network can insist government be more responsive in a new economy—in the people-driven economy where individuals link up directly with each other to solve challenges and improve their lives. This is a bedrock American value we need to make new again.



*Joe Lehman (Mackinac Center), Robert Alt (The Buckeye Institute), Wayne Hoffman (Idaho Freedom Foundation), Jonathan Small (Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs), and Ellen Weaver (Palmetto Promise Institute) discuss state-based solutions with network investors at the 2015 Constitution Society Retreat in Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

We're building networks of support for policies that don't protect the privileges of the few but reflect the way people are living, working, and raising families today.

It is a crazy time politically, and a time of great churn socially, culturally, and economically. In the midst of all this uncertainty is tremendous opportunity. As Milton Friedman said, "Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend upon the ideas that are lying around." Friedman noted that our policy ideas must be ready for that day when "the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable." It is part of our duty to hasten that day, when we move ideas into the Overton window of what is politically acceptable.

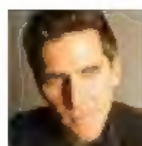
That's why this network was established, for times like these that produce real change. Now is the time to drive our work through that window of opportunity so that individuals and communities in every state flourish. ■



*Tracie Sharp is president of State Policy Network. Write her at [tracie@spn.org](mailto:tracie@spn.org).*

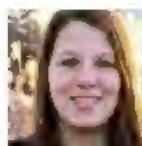
## The best communications advice ...

From Page 2



**Will Swalm, vice president of communications, California Policy Center**

"Know whom you're writing for. It's fun to preach to the already converted—fun and easy. They're looking for confirmation of their biases. Consider the possibility that you're writing for people who disagree with your political philosophy. That's how you change the world. The other stuff is entertainment."



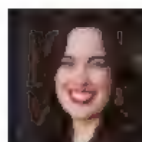
**Krysta West, director of communications, Maine Heritage Policy Center**

"Recently, I learned that you should always design webpages in Microsoft PowerPoint because a slide is the same size as a webpage on a computer screen. Each time you have to change slides, a viewer would have to scroll down. This method helps keep your important information near the top of your page and gives you a better idea of user experience while designing."



**Adam Weinberg, communications and outreach director, Platte Institute for Economic Research**

"Here's some advice worth saying again and again: Remember the value of repeating yourself. There are always going to be new audiences to reach and motivate, so don't lose sight of the impact your words can have over the long haul. If you stay true to a strong core message, you can leave a lasting impression on people hearing it for the first time, even if you've said it a thousand times."



**Geneva Ruppert, communications associate, Mackinac Center for Public Policy**

"At the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, we always assume our opponents are acting with good intentions. It's really rare to find someone who genuinely wants to make the world worse, but it's easy to make that assumption about those who disagree with you. But when we assume they disagree for valid (if easily refuted) reasons, it is far simpler to win them over to your side, make an ally in another fight, or at minimum, earn their respect." ■



*Meredith Turney is director of strategic communications at State Policy Network. Write her at [turney@spn.org](mailto:turney@spn.org).*

## AFFILIATE UPDATES

### ALABAMA



For the second year in a row, the Alabama legislature has been called into a special session to solve the state's budget crisis. Now more than ever, the **Alabama Policy Institute** is committed to educating the people of Alabama on fiscally conservative budget reforms and doing its part to keep Alabama's politicians honest. API will



(From left to right) Mayor Sandy Stimpson, Caleb Crosby, and Congressman Gary Palmer at API's event in Birmingham, Alabama, on Aug. 2, 2016.

release new videos, infographics, and an extensive research paper in the coming weeks. At an Aug. 2 event, Mobile mayor Sandy Stimpson, API's former board chairman, gave an inspiring speech. Congressman Gary Palmer, API's former president, introduced him. API's annual Birmingham Dinner on Oct. 27, 2016, will feature Justice Don Willett of the Texas Supreme Court. [alabamapolicy.org](http://alabamapolicy.org)

### ALASKA



The **Alaska Policy Forum** has been hard at work assessing the state's budget crisis. The current shortfall is nearly

\$4 billion, and there is no end in sight. The Forum has charted the state's revenue and spending since statehood (1959) and normalized it for population and inflation. Alaska's revenue stream remains similar to levels pre-North Slope oil project, while per-capita spending is four times higher for the same period. A Forum summer intern developed a Freedom Index ranking for every state legislator on free markets, government growth, and education reform. Find out more about the Freedom Index on the Forum's website. [alaskapolicyforum.org](http://alaskapolicyforum.org)

### ARIZONA



In 2016, **Goldwater Institute** drafted "Right to Try" legislation passed in seven states: Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Maine, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and West Virginia. Thirty-one states now protect patients' fundamental right to try to save their own lives with promising investigational medicines, without first asking the government's permission. The groundswell in the states has spurred federal legislation in both the House and Senate. Arizona has adopted a Goldwater-created reform allowing district and charter schools to choose from a menu of tests to measure student performance. Before this law, all public schools were required to test students annually using the Common Core-aligned test. Now schools have autonomy to purchase and use tests that more accurately measure achievement—and no longer must teachers tailor curriculum to a single test. [goldwaterinstitute.org](http://goldwaterinstitute.org)

### ARKANSAS



The **Advance Arkansas Institute** hosted a dinner for the General Assembly's

House and Senate Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committees, at which Lee McGrath—legislative counsel for the Institute for Justice—spoke on overextended occupational regulation. McGrath made good use of his 36 hours in Arkansas: The next day, he met with the state's solicitor general and testified on civil forfeiture reform before the Arkansas House and Senate judiciary committees. McGrath also met with Rep. Richard Womack, sponsor of a 2015 licensure reform bill (and AAI's Legislator of the Year). AAI will shortly publish an analysis of avenues for occupational regulatory reform in Arkansas: The future for progress in Arkansas' 2017 legislative session on both occupational licensure and civil forfeiture reform is bright. [advancearkansas.org](http://advancearkansas.org)

### CALIFORNIA



**Pacific Research Institute** recently hosted a reception and dinner in San Francisco, featuring Arthur Laffer, and a celebration of Sally Pipes' 25 years at the helm of PRI. This month, PRI releases a new study that shows the impact of President Obama's Clean Power Plan by income group and locality in 48 states. The study, authored by Wayne Winegarden, reveals how the Obama plan increases the energy bills of low-income and minority families. PRI co-sponsored the Lincoln Initiative's Man vs. Machine conference in San Francisco on Sept. 6. The conference focused on the potential of artificial intelligence and the concept of universal basic income. In October, PRI will host a panel in Sacramento's Capitol to discuss education in California, charter schools, digital learning, and Common Core. Lance Izumi, senior fellow in education studies, and several other experts in education will present their research and findings. [pacificresearch.org](http://pacificresearch.org)



## DELAWARE



This spring the **Caesar Rodney Institute** led the effort to achieve electric bill transparency for Delaware citizens. For too long, the monthly cost of "clean" and "renewable" energy programs to utility customers was a mystery. So CRI worked on behalf of all residents—single moms, people on fixed incomes, families, struggling small businesses—to gain access to this information. Now, utility customers can see a line item on their energy bills indicating their cost to subsidize these programs. Thousands of families in Delaware struggle every day to pay for food, rent, and healthcare. Proponents of taxpayer-funded renewable energy programs often cite the cost of not acting. But these programs do cost struggling families. Empowering them with the information on their portion of the cost is a win for families and transparency. [caesarrodney.org](http://caesarrodney.org)

## FLORIDA



The **Foundation for Government Accountability** continues its mission to lift millions of Americans out of poverty by freeing them from the welfare trap, and is now focused on making prosperity more attainable by reducing barriers to wealth creation. Adults on welfare who are looking to join the workforce sometimes face state and local barriers to finding jobs. Onerous licensing and education requirements limit the options of some who are trying to lift themselves out of poverty. The FGA's Stop the Scam initiative continues to work to protect state welfare programs from fraud and abuse and preserve limited state resources

for the truly needy. By leveraging the latest advances in technology, Stop the Scam helps states verify enrollee eligibility and identifies changes in eligibility in real time, saving billions in state funding annually. [thefga.org](http://thefga.org)

## GEORGIA



The **Georgia Public Policy Foundation** welcomed attorney Ross Coker as research and outreach director. Coker earned his bachelor's in political science at Auburn University and his law degree at Pepperdine University School of Law. Coker is a member of the State Bar of California who practiced in Washington, D.C., before joining the Foundation, and his primary focus will be the Foundation's Criminal Justice Initiative. The initiative, begun in 2010, has helped make Georgia a national leader in criminal justice reform. Ahead of the November election, the Foundation is working to educate Georgians on a referendum on the ballot to establish a statewide Opportunity School District for chronically failing public schools. The Foundation is also preparing for its 25th anniversary celebration dinner in October. [georgiapolicy.org](http://georgiapolicy.org)

## HAWAII



This summer, the **Grassroot Institute of Hawaii** exercised influence on two key issues: creation of a race-based tribe and transition to a public-private partnership for Maui's hospitals. In June, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments in the case of *Akiona v. Hawaii*, a challenge to the voting scheme proposed for the creation of

a Native Hawaiian tribe. Regardless of the court's final determination in the matter, Grassroot's involvement has caused the tribe's proponents to rethink their strategy. In addition, the Institute advocated against a payout to union interests regarding the private takeover of Maui's hospitals. The state employee union has delayed the hospitals' transition, endangering healthcare access for Maui's citizens. Grassroot joined the governor in opposing a legislative payoff that would set a dangerous precedent and put the state pension fund at risk. [new.grassrootinstitute.org](http://new.grassrootinstitute.org)

## IDAHO



The **Idaho Freedom Foundation** released a pension report detailing how lawmakers boost their retirement payouts at taxpayer expense. IFF's communications team produced several videos, including mini-documentaries about corporate welfare, Idaho's big-spending ways, and other topics. An IFF-hosted Medicaid policy debate in Boise set the tone for the 2017 legislative session, when lawmakers will likely consider Medicaid expansion. John L. Livingston, who argued against Medicaid expansion during the debate,



*Dr. John L. Livingston, a retired U.S. Navy trauma surgeon, joins IFF as a medical policy adviser ahead of a looming Medicaid expansion debate in the 2017 legislative session.*

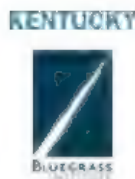
has joined IFF as a medical policy adviser. He will help IFF devise a market-based alternative to Medicaid expansion. IFF vice president Fred Birnbaum and senior policy director Lindsay Russell Dexter presented at a legislative policy forum. Birnbaum outlined flaws in Idaho's budget process, while Dexter Russell detailed education-choice proposals lawmakers should consider in 2017. [idahofreedom.org](http://idahofreedom.org)



**Public Interest Institute's** John Hendrickson has released a new policy study, *Restoring Constitutionalism, Federalism, and Solving Our National Fiscal Crisis: The Possibility of an Article V Convention of the States*. Hendrickson looks at the problems in our nation that such a convention could address, as well as the concerns and unanswered questions it would bring, particularly in regard to rules and procedures and the possibility of a runaway convention. Hendrickson argues that restoring constitutional limited government will require not only federal and state political leaders willing to follow the Constitution but also the American people rediscovering the Constitution and the values of the American Founding. Read this and other Institute publications at [www.LimitedGovernment.org/publications.html](http://www.LimitedGovernment.org/publications.html). [limitedgovernment.org](http://limitedgovernment.org)



**Kansas Policy Institute** celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, and October will include a day-long celebration. Tom Palmer of the Atlas Network and Larry Reed of the Foundation for Economic Education will headline a Freedom Forum throughout the day. They will be joined by various speakers who will present on local and national education reform efforts. The day aims to link KPI's work and history to the national liberty movement and the ideas of freedom. Sen. Rand Paul will keynote that evening's Freedom Gala, KPI's major fundraising event of the year. KPI will also present the fifth annual Ingalls Spirit of Freedom Award, recognizing an unsung hero. [kansaspolicy.org](http://kansaspolicy.org)



Each year, the **Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy** celebrates the life and legacy of the late Nobel laureate Milton Friedman. While Friedman won the Nobel Prize for his economic theory, he also was a great champion of school choice—a cause for which he dedicated much of his life and treasure. He effectively made the case for free markets and free people, and he enjoyed his journey. The Institute will honor the life and legacy of this happy warrior for freedom by having fun while promoting school choice in Kentucky with an evening of baseball, food, and special guests Lt. Gov. Jenean Hampton, the first African American elected to statewide office in the history of the commonwealth, and Robert Enlow, president and CEO of the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice. [blpps.org](http://blpps.org)



This November, Mainers will vote on two ballot measures that could potentially cripple the state's small businesses, which account for 96.8 percent of all businesses. **The Maine Heritage Policy Center** is spearheading efforts to educate voters on the dangers of Question 2, which would increase the income tax rate by 3 percent on households earning more than \$200,000 to "increase funding for education," and also on Question 4, which would raise the minimum wage from \$7.50 to \$12 per hour by 2020, index it to inflation permanently, and eliminate the tip credit. MHPC has also taken a role in the fight against Michael Bloomberg's "universal" background check initiative, Question 3, and hosted Chris Cox, executive director of the NRA

Institute for Legislative Action, as the keynote speaker of the 2016 Freedom and Opportunity Luncheon. [mainepolicy.org](http://mainepolicy.org)



**The Maryland Public Policy Institute** released its 2016 report card for the Maryland General Assembly's legislative session, which concluded in April. *The Annapolis Report* is an unsparing report card on the Democratic-controlled legislature's ability to work with Republican governor Larry Hogan and assigns grades for legislators' work on the state budget, education, and other pressing issues. The report notes legislation that reduces Marylanders' freedom or expands government intervention in their lives, and praises



*The 2016 Annapolis Report grades Maryland legislators on their work on the state budget, education, and other significant policy issues.*

legislation that is consistent with the Institute's mission. Readers can find an overview of the most important bills considered in certain broad subject areas, as well as some lower-profile bills that merit attention. The Institute judges the actions of Maryland legislators based on whether they promote free enterprise, limited government, and civil society. [mdpolicy.org](http://mdpolicy.org)



The Massachusetts legislature passed a law that allows ridesharing companies to continue operating without burdensome restrictions, after **Pioneer Institute** reports urged more competition and innovation. The governor announced



plans to adopt Pioneer's proposal to transfer the MBTA pension system to the more transparent and higher-performing state system. A Pioneer report recommending that state transportation leaders expand use of transponder technology to parking, public transit, and commerce garnered widespread press coverage. At its Friedman Legacy Day forum, Pioneer gathered leading advocates for education reform and religious freedom to urge legislators to remove constitutional barriers to school choice. PioneerLegal joined an amicus brief in *Brott v. U.S.*, an eminent domain case before the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. This summer, as part of its new Roger Perry Internship Program, Pioneer mentored college students and recent graduates, training them in policy research, writing, and social media [pioneerinstitute.org](http://pioneerinstitute.org)



The **Mackinac Center for Public Policy** launched two new lawsuits via the Mackinac Center Legal Foundation. In June, the Foundation sued the Indian River Tourism Bureau on behalf of George Galbraith, who rents cabins to travelers in northern Michigan. The bureau instituted a tax on every cabin Galbraith rents to fund marketing for the area, but Galbraith doesn't find value in the bureau's efforts and says being forced to subsidize its advertising violates his right to free speech. In July, the Foundation sued the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The Center had requested documents related to the Flint water scandal through FOIA, and the department replied that although the documents would require only four and a half hours of staff time to compile, it would need months to fulfill the request. The state's sunshine laws currently do not prohibit such a slow response. [mackinac.org](http://mackinac.org)



**Center of the American Experiment's** new magazine, *Thinking Minnesota*, has a circulation of nearly 10,000. The fall issue highlights economist Joe Kennedy's blockbuster report on Minnesota's economy. In July, the Center hosted back-to-back events: a showing of *Climate Hustle* and a celebration of Milton Friedman's birthday with Rebecca Friedrichs, plaintiff in *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*. The Center's Employee Freedom Project



Under new Center president John Hinderaker *Thinking Minnesota* magazine reaches nearly 10,000 households.

includes an effort to decertify the SEIU's Personal Care Attendant union. Through decertification, PCAs in the bargaining unit could vote to not be represented by the SEIU (or any union). Most PCAs are parents or other relatives caring for a disabled family member who might otherwise be in an institution or cared for by strangers. Learn more at [MNPCA.org](http://MNPCA.org). The Center's day-long Issues Briefing for candidates took place in August and included a keynote by former governor Tim Pawlenty. September's Quarterly Forum was a dialogue on the

minimum wage, and the Fall Briefing on Oct. 24 will feature Jonah Goldberg [americanexperiment.org](http://americanexperiment.org)



In Minnesota's neighboring state of Wisconsin, Act 10 has played an enormous role in changing the size and scope of state government and lessening taxpayer burden. It has also instituted much-needed public sector union reforms. Much of the success of these transformational public employee reforms can be attributed to the vision and determination of Wisconsin's governor. In Minnesota, the **Freedom Foundation of Minnesota** is leading the way to roll back the power and influence of government unions, starting with the state's teachers union. Last month, the Foundation began the first phase of educating and empowering the state's 75,000 public school teachers about their legal rights. The goal is to inform and assist teachers in learning how to keep more of what they earn rather than giving it away to union bosses. [freedomfoundationofminnesota.com](http://freedomfoundationofminnesota.com)



During the coming legislative session, **Empower Mississippi** will continue to lobby for increased funding for the state's Education Scholarship Account. Mississippi's ESA, the Equal Opportunity for Students with Special Needs program, began its second year this fall at maximum capacity. In fact, the program was oversubscribed, and the Mississippi Department of Education held a lottery for the remaining slots. Enrollment in the program has grown by 70 percent over a one-year period, and the number of approved applications has increased by more than 120 percent during the same time period. This year 425 scholarships

have been awarded, providing students with special needs an opportunity to receive an education that meets their specific learning needs. [empowerms.org](http://empowerms.org)



In its first seven months, **Mississippi Center for Public Policy's** new litigation arm, Mississippi Justice Institute, has filed or joined several lawsuits, at least three of which are expected to reach the Mississippi Supreme Court. MJJ is representing parents who are finding their options for educating their children threatened by a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the state's charter school law. MJJ is involved in two government transparency cases, representing a newspaper and a citizen in separate but similar cases related to open meetings. MJJ's first case, on behalf of Jackson taxi drivers who were kept from creating their own taxi companies by arbitrary rules imposed by the city, appears to be nearing resolution. Jackson is considering a new ordinance that would remove most of these barriers to economic liberty. MJJ's director was also appointed to a state task force on civil asset forfeiture. [mspolicy.org](http://mspolicy.org)

## MISSOURI



**Show-Me Institute** continues its push for education reform in an essay by the Friedman Foundation's Marty Lueken and the Institute's director of education policy Michael McShane that examines how Missouri could benefit from a scholarship program designed to increase educational options for Missouri's children. Two new policy researchers joined the Show-Me team this summer: Michael Highsmith and Graham Renz.

Michael is tackling corporate welfare and public labor issues while Graham has been busy dismantling the wildly optimistic projections being used to support expansion of light rail in St. Louis. [showmeinstitute.org](http://showmeinstitute.org)

## NEBRASKA



The **Platte Institute for Economic Research** has earned recognition for its work in building Nebraska's coalition for occupational licensing reform. In a recent editorial, the *Omaha World-Herald* credited the Institute for its focus on the issue heading into the 2017 legislative session. Last session, the Institute successfully supported deregulating natural hair braiding in Nebraska. Previously, state law mandated braiders to become licensed cosmetologists, requiring 2,100 credit hours of unrelated training that could cost up to \$20,000. The Institute's new "Strong Jobs Nebraska" campaign expands the reform effort to other occupations by calling for the least burdensome approach in regulation, particularly when licensing requirements exceed most other states. Massage therapists, for example, must receive 1,000 hours of training in Nebraska, while neighboring Iowa requires only 500, and half of Nebraska's bordering states do not require a state license at all. [platteinstitute.org](http://platteinstitute.org)

## NEVADA



For the **Nevada Policy Research Institute**, September 2016 marked 25 years of defending liberty and free-market principles. After visiting the former Soviet Union in 1990, Judy Cresanta, NPR's founder, returned to

America with a renewed appreciation for the fragility of freedom. A year later she founded NPRI, and her exhaustive efforts laid the groundwork for the Institute's relentless defense of individual liberty and free markets. As the next legislative session approaches, NPRI is once again preparing to shape the discussion over public policy in Nevada. With the Institute's biennial policy book, *Solutions*, lawmakers will have access to critical research and recommendations as elections wrap up, and the winning candidates will have a guide to begin planning the next session. [npri.org](http://npri.org)

## NEW HAMPSHIRE



New Hampshire leads the nation in heroin overdose deaths. Elected officials have responded at the federal and state levels with emergency appropriations bills to increase policing and expand the number of beds in heroin treatment centers. **Granite Institute**, along with the American Conservative Union, sponsored the Heroin Crisis Leadership Forum which brought together stakeholders currently working to address this crisis. Institute president and CEO J. Scott Moody was a keynote speaker at the summit, and he discussed his findings from the Family Prosperity Index ([www.FamilyProsperity.org](http://www.FamilyProsperity.org)), of which substance abuse is a key component. This forum was the official kickoff of the Institute's robust research and outreach campaign on the heroin epidemic. [graniteinstitute.org](http://graniteinstitute.org)



**Josiah Bartlett Center** founder Emily Mead passed away on Aug. 5 at the age of 89. Emily had a lifelong interest



n politics and public policy. Following graduation from Barnard, she was one of only a dozen in the room when Thomas Dewey lost his presidential bid. After many years helping candidates and causes, she achieved a personal dream when she served President George H.W. Bush as senior staff member for the Office of Policy Development from 1989–93. In 1993, Emily and her husband Edgar founded the Josiah Bartlett Center. Edgar and the couple's daughter Mary had attended a talk at the Heritage Foundation in which the speaker urged those attendees to "get out of Washington and head back to your states." Soon after, they both presented Emily with the challenge: start a public policy center in New Hampshire to harness her considerable energy and intelligence. The state and those who have had the honor to work with Emily are so glad she accepted that challenge. [jbartlett.org](http://jbartlett.org)

#### NEW MEXICO



In celebration of Milton Friedman Day, the **Rio Grande Foundation** hosted Bill Peacock of the Texas Public Policy Foundation for a discussion of the Texas and New Mexico economies and what economically challenged New Mexico might learn from Texas. Just in time for "back to school," the Foundation released a report by Todd Myers of Washington Policy Center on LEED schools and how certification increases school building costs but fails to deliver energy efficiency. Budget cuts should be especially handy for New Mexico policymakers as the oil-dependent state faces a massive budget deficit. As the Foundation has repeated since the legislative session concluded in February, the state faces a \$600 million budget deficit—10 percent of the general



The Rio Grande Foundation's Milton Friedman Day celebration included cake and a look at what New Mexico can learn from Texas with Bill Peacock of the Texas Public Policy Foundation.

fund. The Foundation has put together a list of specific cuts to help legislators make needed reductions without raising taxes. [riograndefoundation.org](http://riograndefoundation.org)

#### EMPIRE CENTER

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Clean Energy Standard will force consumers to get half their electricity from costly renewable generators while also subsidizing money-losing nuclear plants. According to the **Empire Center's** analysis, the standard is going to drive some of the country's highest electrical rates even higher. At the same time, the standard may not even be feasible on its own terms. After the state Assembly moved to create a state-run single-payer healthcare system, the Center released "The Case Against AlbanyCare," which disproved many of the claims made by single-payer proponents including that it would save money. The study found that a single-payer system would increase state spending by \$92 billion. The Center identified more than \$400 million in discretionary grants approved by the legislature. New Yorkers can now search this once tightly held data on the Center's transparency website. [empirecenter.org](http://empirecenter.org)

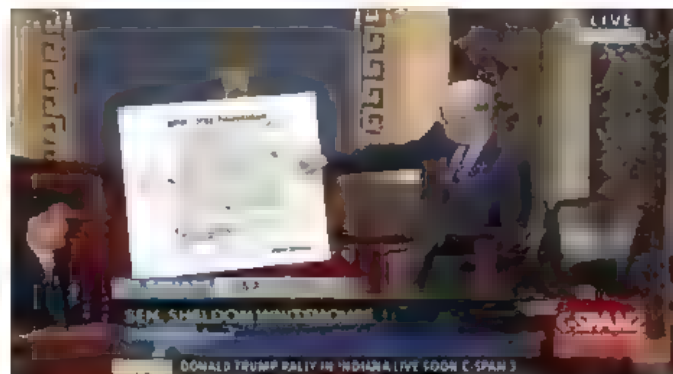
#### NORTH CAROLINA



North Carolina is not only a hotly contested battleground state this election cycle but is also on the front lines of multiple legal battles. One of these is the fight over state election legislation. The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down North Carolina's common-sense voter ID law. The **Civitas Institute** issued a statement in which president Francis De Luca called the ruling "outrageous" and described the circuit court as conducting a "judicial Coup D'état." The Institute created a petition that garnered wide support, calling on Attorney General Roy Cooper to "do [his] job" or resign. Civitas has also seen excellent coverage of its study showing that renewable energy mandates stifle job creation and growth. The study has proven beneficial to North Carolina legislators. In August, the Institute released its annual poll of unaffiliated voters. [nccivitas.org](http://nccivitas.org)



In July, U.S. Senate progressives catapulted the **John Locke Foundation** to the national stage with a five-minute trade from the Senate floor about JLF's analysis of and reporting on climate-change alarmism and catastrophic impacts predicted by the alarmism



Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) singles out the John Locke Foundation on July 12, 2016, on the floor of the Senate in Washington. (C-SPAN image)

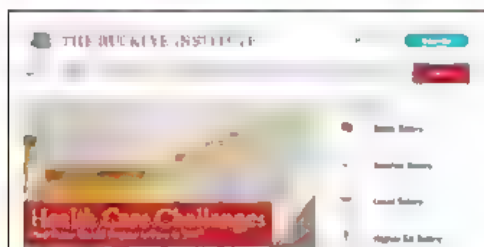
industry. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) lashed out at JLF on C-SPAN as part of a coordinated political campaign that seeks to criminalize free speech and paint climate-change skeptics as devious members of a "web of denial." JLF president and CEO Kory Swanson pushed back quickly and strongly in the media and with supporters, positioning the progressives' attack as an assault on the First Amendment and a crusade against liberty. Whitehouse's targeting of JLF follows progressives' 2015 written request for JLF donor information and work products. [johnlocke.org](http://johnlocke.org)

## OHIO



THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

Just like the buckeye, Ohio's state tree, **The Buckeye Institute** is growing to new heights and bringing good fortune to its fellow citizens. In August, the Institute launched its new look, logo, and website



In August, The Buckeye Institute unveiled its new brand and website at [BuckeyeInstitute.org](http://BuckeyeInstitute.org).

to engage state policymakers, the media, and supporters like never before. The new brand, which features the buckeye tree, symbolizes its continued growth in stature and success, such as its first-in-the-nation legal reforms, its firm stance to keep the federal government out of Ohio's energy policies, and its progress to curtail bureaucratic occupational licensing rules so that every Ohioan can pursue his or her dream job. To see the new Buckeye Institute, meet the team, and explore its extensive library of policy reports, amicus briefs, and expert opinions, visit the Institute's website. [buckeyeinstitute.org](http://buckeyeinstitute.org)

## OKLAHOMA



This summer, the **Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs** unveiled the Center for Investigative Journalism and welcomed Jay Chilton as its director. The Center focuses its investigations on education, legislation, corruption, and critical issues facing Oklahoma not covered by other news outlets. OCPA has also rebranded its morning radio show hosted by vice president Trent England. Every weekday morning on *The Trent England Show*, Trent takes listeners deeper into what's happening in government and how it affects people's lives. *The Trent England Show* podcast is available at [ocpathink.org/radio](http://ocpathink.org/radio) and iTunes. [ocpathink.org](http://ocpathink.org)

## OREGON



**Cascade Policy Institute's** senior analyst Steve Buckstein was a guest on Heartland Institute's Budget and Tax News podcast to discuss a massive gross receipts tax measure on the November ballot (JP 28/Measure 97). If voters were to approve this measure, the Tax Foundation concludes that Oregon's corporate tax climate would be the nation's worst. Cascade is working with business groups around the state to oppose this destructive measure. In June, Children's Scholarship Fund—Portland director Kathryn Hickok participated in Notre Dame's Parental Choice Symposium, which brought together school choice leaders from around the country to learn about thriving parental choice programs. In July, Cascade welcomed Lydia White for a 10-month internship through the Charles Koch Institute's Liberty@Work program. Lydia will assist in all aspects of Cascade's work and is an outstanding addition to the team. [cascadepolicy.org](http://cascadepolicy.org)

## PENNSYLVANIA



Thanks to the **Commonwealth Foundation's** research and advocacy, thousands of Pennsylvania businesses use the Educational Improvement Tax Credit each year to provide low- and middle-income families with private school scholarships. Since 2001, the EITC has been a pillar of school choice in the Pennsylvania, allowing K-12 students to receive financial aid to attend schools that best fit their needs. As part of the recent state budget agreement, lawmakers passed a massive expansion of the EITC. In 2016, the state will award \$125 million in scholarship tax credits, a \$25 million increase over last year. This means more scholarships to students in need—a win for families and taxpayers alike. [commonwealthfoundation.org](http://commonwealthfoundation.org)

## SOUTH CAROLINA



PALMETTO  
PROMISE  
INSTITUTE

With the General Assembly finally adjourned for 2016, **Palmetto Promise Institute** spent the summer celebrating several hard-fought victories. The passage of Right to Try and Volunteer Care—two key PPI priorities—was deeply rewarding, as were the partnerships with SPN allies at Goldwater and the FGA that helped make these great ideas reality. Collaboration is key to creating long-term impact for citizens, so PPI was thrilled to see Right to Try championed in the South Carolina House by Rep. Cezar McKnight, a freshman Democrat. Volunteer Care has already empowered a local doctor to donate his services at a week-long camp for children with special needs, something that liability costs would have otherwise prohibited. PPI is proud of these concrete victories for South Carolina citizens and





Left to right, Rep. Jonathon Hill (R-Anderson), Oran P. Smith (PPF), and Rep. Cezar McKnight (D-Williamsburg) champion Right to Try at committee hearing.

eagerly anticipates more wins in the future through the power of strategic partnerships. [palmettopromise.org](http://palmettopromise.org)



The **South Carolina Policy Council** began championing the principle of income disclosure—the idea that public officials should have to disclose who pays them—back in 2008. State lawmakers are required to disclose virtually nothing about their private or public income. The conflicts are there, but the public can't know about them. It took several years of work—from launching Project Conflict Watch to shame politicians into disclosing their income sources, to exposing conflicts on [www.TheNerve.com](http://www.TheNerve.com)—before lawmakers began treating the issue as a question worth debating. The issue dominated the 2016 legislative session, with the governor championing a weak bill and legislative leaders trying to kill any reform at all. In the end lawmakers passed legislation supposedly requiring disclosure, but not before including at least two significant loopholes. The fight will continue in 2017. [scpolycouncil.org](http://scpolycouncil.org)

## TEXAS



In August, the **Texas Public Policy Foundation** released an original video on Austin's unconstitutional short-term rental ordinance. The video tells the story of the Zataris, who rely on their short-term rental to provide for their family, and can be viewed at [www.AustinPropertyRights.com](http://www.AustinPropertyRights.com). In June, TPPF filed a lawsuit to halt the city of Austin's STR ordinance restricting property owners and guests. TPPF's Fueling Freedom Project released a trio of publications on the implications of the Clean Power Plan: *The Clean Power Plan Will Hurt the Poor and Working Class the Most*, *A Guide to Understanding Global Temperature Data*, and *An Executive Summary of the Clean Power Plan Court Briefings*. In October, TPPF hosted the Right on Crime Dinner, as well as the Roe Dinner after-party at SPN's annual meeting in Nashville. [texaspolicy.com](http://texaspolicy.com)

## UTAH



Last November, along with the Utah Taxpayers Association and represented by the Center for Competitive Politics, the **Libertas Institute** sued the state, seeking to overturn a 2013 law passed that compelled private nonprofit organizations to publicly disclose donor information when the organization spends \$750 or more on political activity in a single year. The attorney general's office just agreed to a settlement that recognizes the law as unconstitutional and not to be enforced. For more information, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/UtahHB43> or contact Nichelle Aiden at [nichelle@libertasutah.org](mailto:nichelle@libertasutah.org). [libertasutah.org](http://libertasutah.org)

## VIRGINIA



The **Thomas Jefferson Institute's** second annual Conference on Virginia's Economic Future brought together more than 150 of the Commonwealth's top business people, academics, and policymakers to hear economists identify how to improve the economic outlook. One way, argues Institute president Mike Thompson, is a tax restructuring eliminating job-killing business taxes, reducing other consumer taxes, and producing up to 79,000 additional private-sector jobs. The institute will release its revised STAMP (State Tax Analysis Modeling Program), the only dynamic economic model available to policymakers in Virginia in time for the General Assembly session. In July, 35 Education Improvement Scholarship Tax Credit foundation administrators gathered to strategize about passing an improved EISTC through the General Assembly. And, in October, the Institute brought together more than 75 attendees at the SPN annual meeting for the 2016 State Energy Summit. [thomasjeffersoninst.org](http://thomasjeffersoninst.org)



The **Virginia Institute for Public Policy** thanks Mark Skousen for dedicating the Wilshire A seminar room to the memory of its founder, John Taylor, at this year's FreedomFest. Co-founder and president Lynn Taylor has since been leading the Institute into the future with a reboot of the website, new social media strategy, and the development of the upcoming TQMedia YouTube channel. Not only this, the long-awaited return of the Tuesday Morning Group is finally here and scheduled to resume in October in Richmond. The Virginia Institute is standing up in the face of a certain

U.S. senator's recent efforts to limit the freedoms of speech and association with the hopelessly conspiratorial "web of denial" narrative. [virginiainstitute.org](http://virginiainstitute.org)

## VERMONT



Vermont is emerging as ground zero in the Left's quest to institute a national carbon tax. Bernie Sanders and his supporters succeeded in adding the carbon tax to the Democrats' national platform. Here in Vermont, Sanders allies in the state house and in the activist community, including the governor and VPIRG, have been pushing a statewide carbon tax. They hope this tax will serve as precedent-setting legislation for other states or for the federal government. The **Ethan Allen Institute** is launching a statewide campaign to educate Vermonters about the negative impacts of a carbon tax on the economy and on people's pocketbooks (such as adding \$0.88 to the price of every gallon of gasoline and \$1.02 to diesel and home heating oil). To help nip this awful policy in the bud before it gets to your state, please contact the Institute today. [ethanallen.org](http://ethanallen.org)

## WASHINGTON



The **Freedom Foundation** inflicted a pair of devastating losses on Washington state's public sector unions in July, strengthening the organization's efforts to inform home-based healthcare and childcare providers of their right to opt out of union participation under *Harris v. Quinn*. In the first case, a Seattle appeals court on July 28 allowed a temporary restraining order preventing

the Freedom Foundation from using the caregivers' contact information to lapse. In the second, a Thurston County judge on July 29 overruled an argument by lawyers for several unions, including AFSCME and the Teamsters, that handing over the names of home care providers would violate their right to privacy. The judge ruled there was nothing in the state's current law exempting specific workers from public disclosure laws that apply to all government workers. [myfreedomfoundation.com](http://myfreedomfoundation.com)



**Washington Policy Center** just released its fifth edition of the *Policy Guide for Washington State*. Edited by vice president for research Paul Guppy, the book provides updated information about a range of important issues facing Washington state. These are policy recommendations WPC believes policymakers should adopt as their main priorities, as research shows these ideas would make the greatest positive difference for all those who call Washington state home. WPC also recently launched its Initiative on Agriculture with events on both sides of the state, featuring the new agricultural policy research director Madiynne Clark, as well as environmental director Todd Myers. WPC will now be able to provide practical ideas for improving the state's Ag climate, eliminating barriers to success, protecting resources, and strengthening the future of Washington's important agriculture sector. [washingtonpolicy.org](http://washingtonpolicy.org)

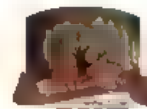
## WISCONSIN



The **Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty** continues to shape the debate on public policy in Wisconsin. Over the

summer, WILL released a comprehensive overview of the experiences of states that have implemented education savings accounts. The report provides Wisconsin policymakers and opinion leaders critical questions and considerations that would need to be addressed—based on the experiences of other states—should they build on Wisconsin's first-in-the-nation voucher program. Additionally, WILL produced a report that examines professional and vocational licensing in Wisconsin and the drag it creates on the economy. That report—released in advance of Wisconsin's biennial budget next spring—will inform policymakers so that Wisconsin can be more friendly to economic liberty, free markets, and entrepreneurship. [will-law.org](http://will-law.org)

## WYOMING



After years of research and advocacy, Wyoming's new civil asset forfeiture law went into effect July 1, 2016. The legislation significantly limits policing for profit and is a great win for **Wyoming Liberty Group** and the people of Wyoming. WyLiberty is working with The Buckeye Institute's Economic Research Center to produce reports on Wyoming's spending gap and the consequences of raising taxes on the people of Wyoming. This will position WyLiberty to oppose tax increases during the interim and next legislative session. WyLiberty's newest staff member, Robert Nelson, will analyze Wyoming's biggest contributor to the state spending gap, the K-12 school system. With billions in savings accounts, Wyoming's political class may use savings to maintain spending during this period of fiscal crisis. WyLiberty's transparency campaign promotes the use of those savings to right-size government. [wyliberty.org](http://wyliberty.org)



## ASSOCIATE



During the summer, **The 1851 Center for Constitutional Law** litigated to stop Ohio cities' "point-of-sale" or "pre-sale" programs. These are regulations that require homeowners to obtain, pay for, and pass a government inspection before they can sell their homes, often resulting in the issuance of thousands of dollars in government mandates as a precondition to closing. The Center is also defending more than 20 farmers from a private pipeline corporation's attempt to use an ambiguous and archaic statute to take their farms through eminent domain. Across Ohio, The Center is challenging unconstitutional prohibitions and taxation of short-term rentals like Airbnb. [ohioconstitution.org](http://ohioconstitution.org)

## ACTON INSTITUTE

The **Acton Institute** recently published a new collection of essays titled *One and Indivisible: The Relationship Between Religious and Economic Freedom*. The book includes reflections from some of today's most respected thinkers on issues surrounding religious and economic liberty. Each writer draws from his or her area of expertise and examines a different facet of the broad topic, but the general thread of the importance of both freedoms connects the individual essays. The book offers a broad analysis of the complex relationship between religious and economic freedom in an accessible format. [acton.org](http://acton.org)



The **American Enterprise Institute** economics team recently released a

new report, *"Economic Freedom and Human Flourishing: Perspectives from Political Philosophy."* The report, relying on some of history's greatest thinkers, interpreted by some of today's leading scholars, asks whether economic liberty is necessary for individuals to lead truly flourishing lives. It turns out many of these thinkers—including Aristotle, Burke, and Mill—have a lot to offer today's public debate. For more information about the work of the Institute's economic scholars or to request a copy of *"Economic Freedom and Human Flourishing,"* please contact Josh Jorgensen at [josh.jorgensen@aei.org](mailto:josh.jorgensen@aei.org). [aei.org](http://aei.org)



The latest "Education Report Card" from the **American Legislative Exchange Council** is now available at [www.alec.org/](http://www.alec.org/) publication. See how your state compares across the country on education choice policy and how students in your state fare. Three publications are coming soon: "State Legislators Pocket Guide for Prescription Drug Policy, State Factor: Putting the Price on Pharmaceutical Innovation," and "State Factor: Regulating Dental Support Organizations' A Case Study." All three will be available at [www.alec.org/publication](http://www.alec.org/publication). Registration is now open for the States and Nation Policy Summit in Washington, D.C., Nov. 30–Dec. 2, 2016. Register today at [www.alec.org/meetings](http://www.alec.org/meetings). [alec.org](http://alec.org)

## AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY

**Grassroots Leadership Academy**, Americans for Prosperity Foundation's effort to educate and train free-market activists, now has over 5,000 activists. At each of GLA's three levels, activists learn new grassroots skills and gain more in-depth knowledge of how to advance freedom in their

community. Ninety-six activists have achieved the Grassroots Leader Certification, the highest level of training to become the top grassroots leaders in their communities. In the states, AFP-VA launched its Path to Prosperity campaign ([www.PathToProsperityVA.com](http://www.PathToProsperityVA.com)), which highlights policies such as comprehensive tax reform, occupational licensing reform, energy freedom, and expanded school choice in order to create more opportunity for Virginians and make the commonwealth more competitive. [americansforprosperity.org](http://americansforprosperity.org)



**Americans for Tax Reform** is pleased to welcome Margaret Mire as the newest addition to its state government affairs team. [atr.org](http://atr.org)



**America's Future Foundation** partnered with the Pacific Research Institute in San Francisco to host a happy hour that attracted more than 60 young professionals. The Indianapolis chapter hosted a panel on criminal justice reform that reached more than 500 young professionals through streaming the event on Facebook. Other events included a talk with Larry Reed in Atlanta, a historic tour of downtown Detroit, and film screenings of *Free State* in New Orleans and *Shelter* in Los Angeles. [americasfuture.org](http://americasfuture.org)



**Ashbrook Center's** partner website, [TeachingAmericanHistory.org](http://TeachingAmericanHistory.org), launched the 2016–17 Saturday Webinar Series: Landmark Supreme Court Cases. Drawing from Ashbrook's popular "50 Core American Documents" and related

primary sources, these monthly webinars will help teachers and citizens develop a deeper understanding of the historical, political, constitutional and social dimensions of 10 of America's most important Supreme Court cases. Each month a different panel of scholars—experts in their fields—will discuss the topic with a live online audience. Webinars are open to the public, and all programs are archived on TAH.org's YouTube channel and on iTunes. Register at [TAH.org/webinars](http://TAH.org/webinars) [ashbrook.org](http://ashbrook.org)



Please join **Atlas Network** for Freedom Dinner on Thursday, Nov. 10, in New York City. Alan Charles Kors, Henry Charles Lea Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania and co-founder of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, will give the Toast to Freedom. Freedom Dinner will also feature the annual Think Tank Shark Tank competition, in which Atlas Leadership Academy graduates pitch new projects to a panel of pro-liberty philanthropists to win \$25,000, and the announcement of the 2016 winner of the prestigious \$100,000 Templeton Freedom Award, the largest prize program celebrating the accomplishments of independent think tanks. Register at [AtlasNetwork.org/FreedomDinner](http://AtlasNetwork.org/FreedomDinner). [atlasnetwork.org](http://atlasnetwork.org)



Massachusetts once again secured the top spot on **The Beacon Hill Institute's** "15th Annual State Competitiveness Index." Released in July, the index measures the ability of states to grow their economies and increase personal income. Along with the National Center for Policy Analysis, BHI is also working on a model that will

project the possible outcomes of the major presidential candidates' tax proposals. The analysis will include an examination of the distributional implications of both plans. A [NewBostonPost.com](http://NewBostonPost.com) article on Massachusetts governor Charlie Baker's plan to streamline state regulations quoted BHI's Frank Conte. [beaconhill.org](http://beaconhill.org)



**Benjamin Rush Institute** student leaders achieved remarkable milestones in 2015–16. Seventy-seven students and guests attended BRI's largest Leadership Conference and two-on-two free-market healthcare debate (open to the public) to date in Washington, D.C. Year-long BRI chapter production exceeded all historical markers, totaling 73 events: 10 debates, 27 lectures, 3 panel discussions, 12 film screenings, 12 introductory and 5 journal club meetings, and 4 community service events—BRI's newest offering. Quality and attendance were up as well, with BRI events reaching over 3,200 people. BRI leaders participated in radio and podcast interviews also, increasing outreach to the high ten thousands. [benjaminrushinstitute.org](http://benjaminrushinstitute.org)



In August, the **Cato Institute** released the latest edition of the "Freedom in the 50 States Index." This index examines state and local intervention across 200+ policy areas, scoring each state on its overall respect for individual freedom. Curious where your state ranks? Visit [www.FreedomInThe50States.org](http://www.FreedomInThe50States.org) or request a copy of the full report from [externalaffairs@cato.org](mailto:externalaffairs@cato.org). Looking ahead, Cato is pleased to announce that the 2017 State Health Policy Summit will take place Jan. 5–7 in gorgeous San Diego,

California. Please contact Heather Curry Kartch directly ([hcurry@cato.org](mailto:hcurry@cato.org)) if you are interested in learning about this special SPN members-only summit. [cato.org](http://cato.org)



The **Center for Competitive Politics**, on behalf of the Libertas Institute and others, settled a challenge to a Utah law requiring nonprofit groups speaking about issues of public importance to register with the state and publicize private information of their supporters. The state conceded the law's unconstitutionality. Justice Clarence Thomas authored a stinging dissent from the Supreme Court's decision not to hear the Center's challenge to a Delaware law forcing citizen groups producing nonpartisan voter guides to violate the privacy of supporters giving as little as \$9 per month. Justice Alito also stated his support for hearing the case. [campaignfreedom.org](http://campaignfreedom.org)



**Citizens' Council for Health Freedom** launched The Wedge of Health Freedom on June 28 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. CCHF has branded today's free-trade zone for healthcare, which is invisible to most Americans, "the Wedge." In the Wedge, care is patient friendly, price friendly, and privacy friendly. The Wedge is also a nationwide grassroots movement to protect and expand this affordable, deregulated option. Look for a Wedge practice in your area! Go to [www.JoinTheWedge.com](http://www.JoinTheWedge.com). CCHF is hosting town halls and "speakers' tables" to share the Wedge with patients, doctors, and citizens who want to escape from the Affordable Care Act into health freedom. [cchfreedom.org](http://cchfreedom.org)





More than 120 policymakers and policy analysts from around the country attended the inaugural educational forum for the Prosperity Zone movement at ALEC. Steve Moore lauded the effort as the most innovative idea he's seen in a long time. Reason's Adrian Moore and American Action's Sam Batkins underscored how the Prosperity Zone nails regulatory best practices.

**Compact for America Educational Foundation Inc.** president and CEO Nick Dranias explained how a compact brings durability, reciprocity, and federal upgradeability to deep free-market reform. NeWAY's Erick Brimen explained how free-market zones can win the policy debate. Join the Compact on Oct. 5 for breakfast in Nashville to learn more. [compactforamerica.org](http://compactforamerica.org)



**Competitive Enterprise Institute** has moved! Please update your records with the new address: 1310 L Street, NW, 7th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005. CEI has a new short film, *I, Whiskey: The Human Spirit!* Inspired by whiskey's rich history, the film highlights how the free market and human ingenuity work together, allowing people to create things they love and that enrich their lives. Visit [WhiskeyMovie.org](http://WhiskeyMovie.org). Keep up with all things CEI via Twitter (@ceidotorg) and weekly newsletters: <http://bit.ly/22LgIYU>. And tune into the weekly RealClear Radio Hour with Bill Frezza at [www.RealClearRadio.org](http://www.RealClearRadio.org). [cei.org](http://cei.org)



**Talent Market** just celebrated its seventh year helping the pro-liberty movement with its talent needs! That means Talent

Market has never known a day before the Big Recession. Instagram or Justin Bieber (Feel old yet?!). Talent Market has helped place over 300 candidates in jobs, and 72 percent of them were new to the pro-liberty world! As a nonprofit serving other free-market nonprofits, Talent Market does everything from hosting workshops on interview skills to running total talent searches. A huge thanks to the unbelievably generous investors, many of you, for making this possible these past seven years. [talentmarket.org](http://talentmarket.org)



**EdChoice** welcomed Veronica Wilson as its new donor relations manager. Veronica has spent much of her career in political campaign fundraising and organization, as well as several years in membership development for the National Federation of Independent Business. [edchoice.org](http://edchoice.org)



Earlier this year, **The Fairness Center** sued a local union (the Allentown Education Association in Pennsylvania) for their president being a "ghost teacher" illegally doing full-time union work on taxpayer time and money, instead of teaching. While the case itself is still undecided, The Fairness Center's attorneys succeeded in getting the school employee pension system to revoke retirement credit and dollars illegally provided to current and past union presidents of the Allentown Education Association. The pension system has since committed to returning that money to the cash-strapped district—a critical victory for taxpayers. [fairnesscenter.org](http://fairnesscenter.org)



The John Templeton Foundation awarded **Foundation for Economic Education** a

three-year, \$1.8 million grant to define new and better ways to communicate with millennials about the humane values and ethical principles of a free society. The project's tagline is: "Innovative free-market media with data-driven distribution and analytics." The project, which will begin in January 2017, will have FEE chief operating officer Richard Lorenc as its director, along with Jeffrey Tucker (director of content), David Veksler (director of technology), and award-winning producer Sean Malone (director of media). Contact Richard Lorenc ([rlorenc@FEE.org](mailto:rlorenc@FEE.org)) with questions or to express interest in partnering. More details available at <https://at.fee.org/2afNYQm>. [fee.org](http://fee.org)



Early registration is now open for the 2016 National Summit on Education Reform, taking place Nov. 30–Dec. 2, in Washington, D.C. Organized by the **Foundation for Excellence in Education**, the Summit is the nation's premier gathering of education reformers. It provides state and local policymakers, education leaders, and advocates with comprehensive information on evolving laws, new trends, successful policies, and the latest innovations that are transforming education for the 21st century. Early registration ended on Aug. 28. Standard registration fees will apply. Register now at [www.excellined.org/national-summit](http://www.excellined.org/national-summit). [excellined.org](http://excellined.org)



**Franklin Center for Government & Public Integrity** is pleased to announce that it has added two new team members this summer. Laurel Patrick and William Patrick (no relation). Laurel serves as the director of communication and media outreach and is working to expand and

maximize [www.Watchdog.org](http://www.Watchdog.org) reporters' media exposure. She brings years of strategic communications experience from the office of Wisconsin governor Scott Walker and the Wisconsin state legislature. William serves as the Florida reporter for [www.Watchdog.org](http://www.Watchdog.org). A native Floridian and veteran journalist, William is based in Tallahassee, where he is working to expose crony capitalism and cover criminal justice reform. [franklincenterhq.org](http://franklincenterhq.org)



States with low levels of economic freedom reduce the ability of their citizens to prosper, as **Fraser Institute's** "Economic Freedom of North America" report has been illustrating for more than a decade. The EFNA Network—with 23 partners (including 14 SPN members) in 22 states—is spreading the message across the U.S. Thanks to their efforts, EFNA media mentions in the U.S. have jumped 243 percent, downloads of the most recent EFNA reports at [www.FreeTheWorld.com](http://www.FreeTheWorld.com) have doubled, and EFNA has been featured in 70 U.S. publications this year alone. Contact [nsight@fraserinstitute.org](mailto:nsight@fraserinstitute.org) to find out more. [fraserinstitute.org](http://fraserinstitute.org)



**Free State Foundation** president Randolph May spoke on internet privacy and Chevron deference at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners' July conference. May and senior fellow Seth Cooper submitted comments to the Federal Communications Commission opposing an FCC proposal to regulate "business data services" in markets that are

effectively competitive. FSF scholars also submitted comments opposing the FCC's proposal to adopt an overly restrictive and costly privacy regime that will deter companies from offering services consumers prefer. As part of its ongoing IP series, FSF released a new paper entitled, "Liberty of Contract and the Free Market Foundations of Intellectual Property." [freestatefoundation.org](http://freestatefoundation.org)



**Free to Choose Network** shared its newest documentary, *Work & Happiness*, with this year's SPN Annual Meeting attendees in Nashville. This latest film from Free To Choose Media dives into the failures of the well-intentioned U.S. welfare system, with personal stories from those trapped within that system. A companion to the best-selling book, *The Human Cost of Welfare*, by Lisa Conyers and Phil Harvey, watch for *Work & Happiness* on your local public TV stations. Visit [www.FreeToChoose.tv](http://www.FreeToChoose.tv). [freetochoosenetwork.org](http://freetochoosenetwork.org)



In August, **FreedomWorks** hosted nearly 50 super activists from 19 states in Chicago for a weekend of education and training on its three signature initiatives—the Pro-Growth Agenda, FreedomWorks Foundation's Regulatory Action Center, and Defending and Supporting the House Freedom Caucus. FreedomWorks also presented on other institutional priorities, such as criminal justice reform and civil asset forfeiture reform. Super activists and bloggers heard from several speakers, including Stephen Moore and Ken Cuccinelli, on FreedomWorks and FreedomWorks Foundation's priorities and received updates from other groups such as the

Competitive Enterprise Institute and the Illinois Policy Institute and left the Windy City armed with knowledge to spread in their communities. [freedomworks.org](http://freedomworks.org)



**The Fund for American Studies** invites you to Charleston, South Carolina, on Nov. 10–12 for its 2016 Leadership Conference: "Liberty and the Post-Election Landscape." Learn how Ambassador John Bolton thinks America's next president will address matters of foreign affairs and international security. Hear remarks from José Piñera, the architect of Chile's personal pension system; Clemson's Bradley Thompson; and Wake Forest's Jim Otteson. See how TFAS programs, and its 16,000 alumni, are building a brighter future by upholding values essential to the preservation of a free society. The conference will take place at the beautiful Francis Marion Hotel. To learn more and register online, visit [www.TFAS.org/LC2016](http://www.TFAS.org/LC2016). [TFAS.org](http://TFAS.org)



**The Heartland Institute** celebrated its 32nd anniversary on Sept. 15 with some 500 guests at a reception and dinner at The Cotillion, a fine banquet hall in Palatine, Illinois. Political satirist and author P.J. O'Rourke delivered an incisive and funny keynote address about the 2016 election and the state of politics and culture in America today. Heartland was also honored to award this year's Heartland Liberty Prize to conservative icon Morton Blackwell—a man who has dedicated his life to training thousands of warriors in the freedom movement. To watch the presentations at the dinner, visit [www.Benefit.Heartland.org](http://www.Benefit.Heartland.org). [heartland.org](http://heartland.org)





The **Heritage Foundation's** post-Obama initiative outlines the devastating effects of Obama Administration policies and provides policy solutions designed to unite the conservative movement and help the next president build a stronger society, economy, and national defense. "Farms and Free Enterprise: A Blueprint for Agricultural Policy" is a major report that goes beyond the status quo of central planning and subsidies to outline eight principles to guide reforms and shape a free-market vision for agriculture policy. The "2016 Index of Military Strength" provides an annual accounting of the strength and readiness of U.S. armed forces. [heritage.org](http://heritage.org)



In **The Independent Institute's** new book, *Nature Unbound: Bureaucracy vs Environment*, Randy Simmons, Ryan Yonk, and Kenneth Sim critique government environmental policy through the lenses of both biological ecology and political economy. They show that demonstrably false assumptions have guided environmental policy since the late 1960s, leading to a host of ineffective or wasteful big-government policies—on air pollution, water pollution, endangered species, wilderness, energy, and more. The mistakes have empowered political power-mongering in ways that have encroached on property rights, burdened the general public, and degraded the civic landscape. [Independent.org](http://Independent.org)



Looking to boost your in-house research and policy programs? The Find Scholars program at the **Institute for Humane Studies** is a free service that connects liberty-advancing organizations to a

growing network of over 5,300 freedom-friendly experts who can help you achieve your policy and research goals. The Find team can introduce your state policy team to highly credible academics available for newly commissioned research, expert testimony, op-eds, and more. IHS also offers academic peer reviews and have reviewed seven state-based studies this year alone. Connecting to experts is easier than ever. Email [Find@TheIHS.org](mailto:Find@TheIHS.org). [findscholars.org](http://findscholars.org)



The **Jesse Helms Center's** flagship program, the Free Enterprise Leadership Challenge, just concluded its 21st summer. This year, 277 high school students from 10 states attended one of five summer sessions. Sessions took place at Houston Baptist University, Wingate University, Midlands Technical College, Palm Beach Atlantic University, and Campbell University. In other news, the Helms Center Archives recently released a digital exhibit of Sen. Helms and the seven presidents with whom he served. The link to the Presidential Collection can be found on the Center's website. [jessehelscenter.org](http://jessehelscenter.org)



On July 29, **The John William Pope Center for Higher Education Policy** hosted its annual Friedman Day luncheon to commemorate the birthday of economist Milton Friedman. Bruce Caldwell, who serves as director of the Center for the History of Political Economy at Duke University, spoke at the luncheon in Greensboro, North Carolina. Caldwell explored an important topic for the future of economics education in America: "Fighting the Decline in the History of Economics:

How Will Students Today Learn about Milton Friedman?" [popocenter.org](http://popocenter.org)



**Judicial Watch** awaits a federal court ruling on whether the deposition of former secretary of state Hillary Clinton is warranted regarding the non-state.gov email system she used while serving at the State Department. JW has deposed seven former Clinton top aides and State Department officials, including Cheryl Mills and Huma Abedin. JW is defending Maryland voters who challenged the constitutionality of Maryland's congressional redistricting maps. JW also filed an amicus curiae with the Allied Educational Foundation in support of a North Carolina election integrity law requiring voters to show a photo identification card before casting a ballot. [judicialwatch.org](http://judicialwatch.org)



The **Leadership Institute** has trained and deployed 35 field representatives this fall to universities across the country to organize, train, and inspire conservative students. LI's unique network of 1,642 active conservative student groups in all 50 states is the largest such network in the country. In 2015, LI field staff newly identified 53,986 conservative students on campuses around the country. Since 1997, LI's field program has activated thousands of students to fight and win battles against leftist abuses. In 2015, LI saw 26 conservative victories and policy changes on campus. Organizations interested in connecting with conservative students can email Kristin at [KDoobson@LeadershipInstitute.org](mailto:KDoobson@LeadershipInstitute.org). [leadershipinstitute.org](http://leadershipinstitute.org)



On Oct. 3, the **Mercatus Center** at George Mason University hosted a half-day conference for organizational leaders and senior policy professionals interested in healthcare policy. Mercatus will release a comprehensive, 50-state index ranking healthcare freedom this November. Kentucky governor Matt Bevin announced his plan for a state regulatory review initiative based on Mercatus research by Laura Jones describing British Columbia's regulatory reforms. Economist James Bailey's research found that CON laws increase Medicare spending by nearly 7 percent in affected states, and that states that repeal CON laws see healthcare costs drop by four percent in five years. [mercatus.org](http://mercatus.org)



A startling free speech "mini-doc" recently premiered on the **Moving Picture Institute's** online political comedy channel, *We the Internet*. The film follows a filmmaker who returns to his alma mater, Brown University, to ask whether universities have killed free speech and open debate. In its first week the film earned hundreds of thousands of views and major media attention. Watch the film and all the hilarious videos that make the channel a sensation at [www.WeTheInternet.TV](http://www.WeTheInternet.TV). Visit their website, [MovingPictureInstitute.org](http://MovingPictureInstitute.org), to learn about their films and programs. Contact [rob@thempi.org](mailto:rob@thempi.org) to arrange screenings and recommend filmmakers for fellowships, grants, and internships. [movingpictureinstitute.org](http://movingpictureinstitute.org)



Hillary Clinton failed to disclose the actual sponsors of 30 speeches by Bill Clinton, as required, while she was secretary of state or in the U.S. Senate. The speaking fees totaled \$7 million, but the payers were listed as speaking bureaus or other third parties, masking the identity of who actually paid the fees—often as much as \$290,000 per speech. This original research by the **National Legal and Policy Center** was the basis for a July 20 Washington Free Beacon story by Alana Goodman that became the lead item on Drudge. [nlpc.org](http://nlpc.org)

## NATIONAL REVIEW INSTITUTE

**National Review Institute** had a busy fall in San Francisco! Continuing its partnership with the Pacific Research Institute, NRI senior fellow Andrew C. McCarthy spoke at their luncheon and Young Leaders Circle event. NRI expanded its Regional Fellows program to the Bay area, and the new class is off to a great start learning the foundations of conservative thought from leading conservative thinkers. In late September, NRI held its third annual William F. Buckley Jr. Prize Dinner in San Francisco. Secretary George P. Schultz was awarded the Prize for Leadership in Political Thought, and Michael Grebe of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation received the Prize for Leadership in Supporting Liberty. [nriinstitute.org](http://nriinstitute.org)



In July, West Virginia's right-to-work law took full effect. Union bosses immediately filed a state lawsuit seeking to overturn the law and restore forced union dues. The **National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation** established a task force to defend and enforce West

Virginia's right-to-work law from Big Labor attempts to repeal or undermine it. Foundation staff attorneys have already defended state right-to-work laws from union legal assaults in Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. [nrtw.org](http://nrtw.org)



As always, **PERC** offer a rights-based approach to environmental conservation and natural resource management. Recent and forthcoming research looks at private land stewardship, market adaptation to climate change, and environmental policy in the Anthropocene era—of particular interest to our friends along the Pacific, "Protecting Marine Ecosystems: Prescriptive Regulation vs. Market Incentives" by Bob Deacon and Steve Miller. Of interest to our international friends is Nick Parker's paper on the "conflict minerals" section of the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act. Of more general interest is "Regulating Our Way to Prosperity? The Use and Abuse of Cost-Benefit Analysis" by Roger Meiners. [perc.org](http://perc.org)



**R Street Institute** is pleased to welcome Ryan Call as its new central region director and senior fellow. Based out of Denver, Call will advance R Street's policy priorities across the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains states. He joins R Street from Hale Westfall LLP and previously served as the chairman of the Colorado Republican Party. [rstreet.org](http://rstreet.org)



**Reason Foundation** and Allvue sponsored "The Future of Education Finance Summit" on July 22 in Baltimore,



bringing together education stakeholders for networking and discussion. Reason won seven first-place trophies at the 58th annual Southern California Journalism Awards, which honors editorial excellence throughout the region. With over 4.5 million views between YouTube and Facebook, "Hillary Clinton vs. James Comey: Email Scandal Supercut" juxtaposes Clinton's on-the-record statements with the FBI director's findings, producing a damning picture of the former secretary of state's account of her actions. The video went viral on social media and became Reason's most viewed video to date. [reason.org](http://reason.org)



Time for the Trendsetter Awards! Every year, **Spark Freedom** recognizes outstanding creative achievements in free-market communications. This year's winners were celebrated at a communications reception during SPN's Annual Meeting. This summer, Spark Freedom launched its distance-coaching packages for organizations looking to build their strategic plans, marketing foundation, and communications skills, but not yet ready to gather for a three-day, in-person work session. Spark Freedom's ArrowHead Accelerator for Jobs equipped ten participants with strong messaging and presentation skills for their states' 2016 legislative sessions. Want to attend the November ArrowHead Accelerator in Washington, D.C.? Contact [nicole@SparkFreedom.org](mailto:nicole@SparkFreedom.org). [sparkfreedom.org](http://sparkfreedom.org)



**The Steamboat Institute** is proud to announce Hadley Heath Manning as the 2016–17 recipient of the Tony Blankley Chair for Public Policy and

American Exceptionalism. Manning will receive a \$10,000 stipend, as well as support for travel, speaking engagements, and investigative reporting trips. She is director of health policy at the Independent Women's Forum. The Tony Blankley Chair provides high-profile recognition and financial support to emerging conservative thought leaders who share the principles espoused by the late Tony Blankley and The Steamboat Institute: limited taxation, limited government, free-market capitalism, personal responsibility, and strong national defense. [steamboatinstitute.org](http://steamboatinstitute.org)



In September, **Students for Liberty** hosted the Liberty on Campus Working Group at the offices of Americans for Tax Reform in Washington, D.C. SFL has named PhD candidate Wolf von Laer as its new chief executive officer. Von Laer replaces Alexander McCobin, who was at the helm of SLF for its first 10 years. Wolf will receive his PhD in political economy from King's College London. Von Laer's academic work focuses on entrepreneurship, the political economy of crisis, public choice, and Austrian economics. [studentsforliberty.org](http://studentsforliberty.org)



**Tax Foundation's** federal team continues to provide analysis and explanation of proposed presidential tax plans. At the state level, Foundation scholars have testified or presented in over 30 states so far this year, and will be focusing for the remainder of 2016 on Oregon's destructive business tax ballot initiative; Colorado's proposal

to double taxes; and tax change efforts in Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. [taxfoundation.org](http://taxfoundation.org)



This September, **Truth in Accounting** launched its seventh "Financial State of the States" report. Each year, TIA analyzes the financial reports of all 50 states to provide citizens with a clear picture of their government's financial condition. This comprehensive analysis covers topic areas such as accounting gimmicks used to hide debt, why states' reported pension debts have increased this year, and hidden retiree healthcare debt. TIA ranks states from best to worst based on taxpayer burden, which is each taxpayer's share of state debt. Curious where your state ranks? Check out TIA's website for more! [truthinaccounting.org](http://truthinaccounting.org)



**Young America's Foundation** leapt into the new school year with a powerful lineup of conferences, campus lectures, and activism events. The Foundation marked the 15th anniversary of its 9/11: Never Forget Project, which helps students set up millions of American flags on campuses across the country to memorialize the victims of the 9/11 attacks. Top conservatives, including Steve Forbes, Katie Pavlich, Allen West, and Matt Walsh, spoke at Foundation programs, bringing conservative ideas to hundreds of new students. The Foundation also hosted students at many conferences, bringing them face-to-face with conservative leaders and training them to promote freedom on campus. [yaf.org](http://yaf.org) ■



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Thank you to the staff,  
board, and supporters of the  
Beacon Center of Tennessee for  
serving as the gracious hosts  
for SPN's 24th Annual Meeting.

Learn more about the Beacon Center  
of Tennessee at [beaconctrn.org](http://beaconctrn.org).

See photos from the Annual Meeting  
and Beacon Center's host night at  
[Facebook.com/StatePolicy](https://www.facebook.com/StatePolicy).

